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United States Department of Agriculture,
BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY.

LETTERS RELATING TO THE DISTRIBUTION OF VACCINE.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, D. C., May 29, 1899.

MR. HENRY R. STRONG,
Publisher National Druggist,
514 Century Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

DEAR SIR: Your letter of the 9th inst., together with the May issue of the *National Druggist*, reached my office while I was absent in the South, and consequently could not be replied to at an earlier date.

You invite my attention to an editorial which you admit was inspired, if not written, by the Pasteur Vaccine Company, of Chicago, and you state that if this company has correctly represented me it seems that the doctrine which I have laid down is the very essence of socialism, etc.

In its zeal to force upon the farmers of the United States, at exorbitant prices, a vaccine made in foreign countries, for the cattle disease known as blackleg, the Pasteur Vaccine Company has made statements which will not bear very close scrutiny. Take, for example, their first sentence: "During the closing days of the last Congress the Secretary of Agriculture was before that body demanding nearly a million dollars, to be expended in the manufacture of serums, vaccines, etc., for free distribution to the farmers and cattle raisers of the country."

As a matter of fact, only \$950,000 was asked for to do all of the work of the Bureau of Animal Industry. This covers all of the meat inspection service, the inspection of stock yards and animals in transit, the inspection of cattle from the Southern States to prevent the spread of Texas fever, the inspection of imported animals, the inspection of all the cattle and sheep exported from the country, the supervision of the steamships carrying such cattle, the investigation and promotion of the dairy industry of the country, the promotion of the exports of animal products, and the investigation of diseases and other subjects pertaining to the animal industry. The proportion of the appropriation expended for making serums, vaccines, etc., is trifling, and no special appropriation was asked for that purpose. From this statement you can see how much is reality and how much imagination in the remainder of that paragraph.

The rest of the alleged editorial is devoted to an exposition of our form of government, and attempt to show that in the distribution of blackleg vaccine the Government has adopted a policy through which "we are drifting upon the same reefs and quicksands that have wrecked all the republics of history, and which, unless the tendency is quickly, sharply, and effectually checked, will wreck ours and make slaves of our people." Anyone who considers this extravagant language for a moment must see the absurdity of the conclusion. That this great Government will be wrecked by any effort to eradicate contagious diseases from among the farm animals of the country is an idea too ridiculous to receive serious consideration.

The Bureau of Animal Industry was established primarily to investigate and eradicate contagious diseases of animals. It has completely stamped out the contagious pleuro-pneumonia of cattle; and while by doing so it broke up the business of certain individuals who were selling vaccines, proprietary medicines, and others who were trafficking in diseased animals, the country has actually benefited immensely, and, so far as can be determined, our form of government was not appreciably damaged. The Department has not made a general distribution of any serums or vaccines, with the exception of the vaccine for blackleg, which has been distributed, first, as the least expensive means of learning the prevalence and distribution of the disease in our territory; secondly, to reduce the losses to a minimum; thirdly, to determine experimentally the effect of systematic vaccination in eradicating the disease; fourthly, to determine the relative merits of the double and single vaccines.

The distribution of vaccine is the only available means by which this information can be obtained, and in such a case I believe it the duty of the Government to furnish the vaccine and require reports as to the results secured by its use. The infection is kept up by the carcasses of animals which die, and, if by vaccination the deaths are reduced to a minimum, it is reasonable to suppose that the contagion will be gradually stamped out.

Our experience shows that thousands of people will use the Government vaccine where they would not use the commercial article. It has always been considered a State function in this country to control diseases, notwithstanding that the control of disease must lessen the sale of the remedies for the diseases controlled or eradicated. For such sanitary work we long had boards of health, live stock boards, sanitary inspectors, and other officials, whose duty it is to prevent disease, and this Department is now only doing the Federal Government's share in this line of work.

I do not think that you will advocate the cultivation or maintenance of disease among our food-producing animals for the sake of making a market for commercial preparations. At any rate, in a

country such as ours, the good of the majority must be considered; and surely the interests of our great farming population and of our foreign trade in animal products are to be considered rather than the interests of a few individuals who manufacture or sell vaccines.

The Department has never distributed serums of any kind. It has furnished tuberculin to State authorities who were cooperating with the Department for the control of tuberculosis, and it is using hog cholera serum experimentally through its own officers in developing the treatment of swine diseases by this method. The remarkable statement of the Pasteur Vaccine Company, therefore, applies only to the blackleg vaccine. It costs less than a cent a dose to make this vaccine, and the farmers were required to pay an advance on this cost of twelve hundred to two thousand per cent.

Thanking you for bringing the matter to my attention, and believing that you will, after reflection, see that it is my duty to carry out the purpose for which the Department was created, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

JAMES WILSON,
Secretary.

UNITED STATES SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
December 6, 1899.

DEAR SIR: I inclose a letter from Messrs. Parke, Davis & Co., in regard to the manufacture of vaccine, and would be very glad to have your views on the subject.

Yours, very truly,

JAMES McMILLAN.

Hon. JAMES WILSON,
Secretary of Agriculture.
(Inclosure.)

PARKE, DAVIS & Co.,
Detroit, December 1, 1899.

Hon. JAMES McMILLAN,
United States Senate,
Washington, D. C.

DEAR SIR: Believing that it is not the intention of the Government of the United States to place a large sum of money at the disposal of any Department or Bureau for the purpose of enabling it to enter into a subsidized competition with private enterprise, we beg leave to make a respectful protest against the action of the Bureau of Animal Industry in distributing free of charge on an extensive scale its large output of blackleg vaccine.

Unless we are misinformed the Secretary of Agriculture, Hon. James Wilson, assured the Senate Committee about a year ago, when the last appropriation of \$950,000 was on the carpet, that the Department of Agriculture would withdraw from the exploitation of blackleg vaccine and other biological products as soon as their scientific status should be established. Since that time, however, we have seen at least one communication in which the Honorable Secretary declares that it is the purpose of the Department of Agriculture to make and furnish blackleg vaccine as an "experiment to determine whether the use of this systematically and thoroughly for a number of years will lessen the amount of disease and tend to eradicate it." We respectfully submit that this language expresses a strange and novel idea of an experiment. There is absolutely nothing experimental about blackleg vaccine. Its efficacy in the prevention of symptomatic anthrax was positively established and recognized as long as fifteen years ago, and, weighing our words deliberately, we assert that there is not a vaccine or serum or biological product in existence which is so infallibly and unerringly efficacious in the prevention of a given disease as is blackleg vaccine. Its use is attended with less uncertainty than is that of bovine vaccine virus for the prevention of smallpox.

The eradication of a disease has nothing whatever to do with an "experiment." Until the scientific status of a product like blackleg vaccine is established, the Bureau of Animal Industry may with entire propriety prosecute its experimental work; but after that point its work ceases to be experimental and becomes just as distinctly industrial and commercial as is our own.

Why should the eradication of a disease be defended on the score of "experiment"? For example, quinine is the established, recognized and classical remedy for malaria. But what would now be thought of the proposition that its manufacture should proceed under Government auspices until malaria should be eradicated? Diphtheria antitoxin is the remedy par excellence for diphtheria. If it had been made experimentally by the Department of Agriculture, would the plea of "experiment" now justify its continued manufacture until diphtheria should be eradicated?

The truth is that we have in blackleg vaccine an absolute specific of purely recognized power and efficacy, with a history of usefulness embracing at least fifteen years. Why, then, should not its production be left to private enterprise, like the production of any other commodity? When is the experiment to cease? When is the private manufacturer to reap the proper and just reward of his enterprise in making a reliable product? After the disease has been wholly eradicated?

We would direct your attention to the peculiar injustice which the competition of the Bureau of Animal Industry is calculated to inflict on private producers of any remedy which is preventive as well as curative. The more these products are used the less they are needed. Thus, as diphtheria antitoxin is more freely employed for prophylactic and curative purposes, the amount of diphtheria will be enormously reduced and the consumption of our remedy will be correspondingly curtailed. So we know that our lease of life is temporary, and that the very potency and efficacy of our biological products tend constantly to saw off the branch to which we must cling for revenue and profit. But we realize that this can not be prevented, and we seek our reward in an augmented reputation and an at least temporary profit while the business lasts. Against the operation of a natural law we have no grievance, but we do strenuously object to governmental competition in a field that should be left to private enterprise as clearly as the manufacture of foods and medicines in general.

If we have not expressed ourselves with sufficient clearness respecting any point broached in the foregoing, we shall be very happy to answer any questions that you may wish to put to us. We have no desire to interfere with the proper experimental work and the scientific investigations of the Bureau of Animal Industry. We have no hostile feeling for the Bureau. It has done, it is doing, an admirable work, and we should be sorry to see it crippled. All we object to is its invasion of the manufacturer's field, and we believe that you will support our contention that when a biological product is known beyond doubt to possess certain properties, and to be capable of doing a certain work, its manufacture should be relegated to firms who have the capital, the scientific resources, the reputation, and the ambition to do full justice to the needs of the consumer.

We have the honor to remain,

Very respectfully, yours,

PARKE, DAVIS & Co.
W. W. WARREN,
General Manager.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, D. C., December 9, 1899.

Hon. JAMES McMILLAN,
United States Senate.

DEAR SENATOR: I am in receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, inclosing a letter from Messrs. Parke, Davis & Company, in regard to the manufacture of blackleg vaccine, and I take pleasure in complying with your request to express my views on the subject.

The Bureau of Animal Industry of this Department, as you know, was established by Congress to investigate and to eradicate the contagious, infectious, and communicable diseases of the domesticated animals. One of the first tasks which was brought to its attention by Congress was the eradication of the disease known as contagious pleuro-pneumonia of cattle. Not only was it necessary to make investigations of that disease to determine its nature and the best means of controlling it, but the Bureau was directed to search out, purchase, and destroy the diseased and exposed cattle. The duties of that Bureau in regard to other contagious diseases of animals are expressed in the same terms as were used in regard to pleuro-pneumonia; consequently, the work of that Bureau is not only experimental, but it is also executive.

To this work for the investigation and control of animal diseases, Congress has since added the inspection of meats for the interstate and foreign trade, the inspection of live animals for the export trade, the inspection of vessels to determine that they are properly fitted for safely and humanely carrying these animals, and the inspection and quarantine of animals imported into the United States. Each branch of this work is of great magnitude, and collectively the work of the Bureau is much more extensive than is usually appreciated, and necessarily requires a large force and considerable expenditures.

The \$950,000 appropriation referred to by Messrs. Parke, Davis & Company is made to cover all of these different lines of work. The Department has asked for no special appropriation for making black-leg vaccine; and the expense of manufacturing it is trifling, as it is easily made in the laboratory used for the investigation of diseases without any material increase in the expenses. The fact is, this vaccine is simply the flesh of animals which have died from the disease, and which has been dried, powdered, and subjected to a high temperature to properly reduce its virulence. One ounce of this dried flesh is sufficient for about three thousand doses of vaccine; so that it is easily seen that the cost of the vaccine per dose is almost infinitesimal when made by this Department, which must have scientific experts in its employ for other purposes, whose time is not constantly occupied in original scientific investigations. When the Department began making this powder the commercial houses were charging our stock raisers at the rate of about four hundred dollars an ounce for this dried and powdered meat.

The method of making this vaccine was not discovered by Parke, Davis & Company, but, as they admit, has been known for years. It was first made in Europe, and at the time this Department began making and distributing it, all that was available to our farmers was imported from foreign countries. Under these circumstances, I do not see the ground upon which this firm can claim a reward from the

farmers of the United States for manufacturing this product. They certainly were at no expense either for its discovery or for its introduction to the American stock raisers.

To return now to the argument against the position of the Department that it is making an "experiment to determine whether the use of this systematically and thoroughly for a number of years will lessen the amount of disease and tend to eradicate it." They say there is absolutely nothing experimental about blackleg vaccine. In this opinion the Department most respectfully differs from them. When the Department began its work in this direction two vaccinations were required in order to protect animals from this disease. The Department introduced a vaccine which could be used at one operation, thereby saving to the stock raisers half of the expense of inoculating their animals, and has already proved that the single vaccination is for all practical purposes as good as the double vaccination. The Department then proposed to go a step farther and determine whether the systematic and continued use of this vaccine by all cattle raisers in infected districts would not eradicate the disease. This work, we must admit, is executive as well as experimental, since, in testing the efficacy of the vaccine, if the experiment is a success, the disease will be eradicated. But, as already explained, Congress has given to the Bureau of Animal Industry both experimental and executive functions, consequently it is not going beyond its jurisdiction in either direction. Parke, Davis & Company admit that it is probable that a continued and systematic use of vaccine will greatly reduce and probably eradicate the disease. They say: "The more these products are used the less they are needed. Thus, as diphtheria antitoxin is more freely employed for prophylactic and curative purposes, the amount of diphtheria will be enormously reduced and the consumption of our remedy will be correspondingly curtailed. So we know that our lease of life is temporary, and that the very potency and efficacy of our biological products tend constantly to saw off the branch to which we must cling for revenue and profit."

This Department keeps tolerably well informed in regard to the use of these biological products in the prevention and control of diseases, but it does not know of any case where blackleg vaccine has been systematically and persistently employed a sufficient time to determine its effect in eradicating the disease; consequently its action in this direction is experimental and at the same time is the only practical line of executive work for relieving our farmers from the effects of this plague. Now, as a matter of fact, the commercial houses have charged enormous profits upon this blackleg vaccine; and partly because of the exorbitant price, and partly because many people will not use such a remedy if they are obliged to pay for it,

the only hope of securing a sufficiently general and uniform use of the vaccine to determine its efficacy in eradicating the disease is for the Department to supply it free of cost.

But here the Department is met by the demand of the manufacturers that such efforts for the eradication of disease shall be suspended, and that the disease shall be allowed to continue its ravages indefinitely in order that said manufacturers may reap the benefits which come from supplying remedies. This demand could be entered against the efforts of the Department to eradicate any other disease of farm animals with as much consistency as it can with blackleg. In fact, those persons who were dealing in diseased cows and remedies for pleuro-pneumonia were equally opposed to the efforts of the Department in eradicating that disease; the manufacturers of sheep dips protest against the efforts of the Department to control and eradicate sheep scab, and so on. It is plain that either this Department must go on with its work for eradicating the contagious and infectious diseases of the domesticated animals whenever it finds a means of doing this effectually, without regard to the loss of business which this brings to the manufacturers of remedies, or it must retire from this field and allow our domestic food supply, our enormous export trade in live animals and in animal products, and the hundreds of millions of dollars invested by our farmers in farm animals to be continually menaced and often seriously affected from this cause. For fifteen years it has been the policy of the Government to assist the agricultural industry by active efforts for eradicating such diseases, the experiments being made to determine the best methods of procedure; and I believe that it is the part of sound public policy to continue such assistance, especially as at the same time we protect the nation's food supply and an important part of the foreign trade.

Hoping that this expression of opinion will be sufficiently explicit for your purpose, I am,

Very respectfully,

JAMES WILSON,
Secretary.

H. K. MULFORD COMPANY,
PHARMACEUTICAL CHEMISTS,
FACTORS OF COMPRESSED TABLETS,
412 TO 420 S. THIRTEENTH STREET,
Philadelphia, January 16, 1900.

SECRETARY AGRICULTURE DEPT.,
Washington, D. C.

DEAR SIR: We beg to refer you to inclosed communication from our Chicago house, and will be under special obligations if you will advise what is the policy of your Department, so that we may know

just what competition we may expect from the Government before increasing our laboratories for blackleg vaccine, mallein, anthrax vaccine, and such preparations as are used in veterinary practice.

If private enterprise is to be checked under Government auspices, we should like to know, so that we may shape our business accordingly. Kindly return the inclosures, for which we enclose envelope.

Appreciating the value of the work you have already done, and trusting it will not be made antagonistic to private business, we remain,

Very truly, yours,

H. K. MULFORD COMPANY.
H. K. MULFORD,
Vice-President.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, D. C., January 20, 1900.

THE H. K. MULFORD CO.,
*412-420 South Thirteenth St.,
Philadelphia, Pa.*

GENTLEMEN: Referring to your letter of the 16th inst., in which you ask me to advise you as to what policy is adopted by this Department in the distribution of preparations such as are used in veterinary practice, I would say that this Department furnishes mallein and tuberculin to State authorities who have power to investigate glanders and tuberculosis in animals, and who agree to make proper disposition of those affected. The Department does not make or distribute anthrax vaccine, but it does make and distribute blackleg vaccine, and has done so for nearly two years, furnishing it to the owners of the stock. It is one of the duties of the Department of Agriculture to control and eradicate the diseases of animals, and I do not see how it can perform this duty without interfering with those who supply remedies for the diseases controlled.

Very respectfully,

JAMES WILSON, *Secretary.*

(Inclosures returned.)